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United States Department of Agriculture

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THE MARKET BASKET
by
Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

TAKE CARE OF RUBBER

From the WELCOME mat outside the door to the bathtub plug--rubber makes up entirely or partly hundreds of common household articles.

Since rubber is a vital war material and rubber supplies are limited, smart homemakers are taking extra good care of even the commonest of rubber items these days. To help them, the Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture offers the following suggestions.

RUBBER ENEMIES

Enemy No. 1 of household rubber is heat. The higher the temperature--the more quickly rubber gets weak, cracks, becomes sticky. Cold does not harm rubber.

Enemy No. 2 is light. Sunlight--because it combines the harmful action of light and heat--is hard on the kind of rubber used in most household articles--especially if the rubber is partly stretched when the sun hits it. Garden hose and other rubber goods made for use outdoors are made from compositions specially designed to resist sunlight.

Enemy No. 3 are oils and greases. It's all right for rubber to come in contact with either for short periods. But always remove all trace of oil or grease from rubber as soon as possible. If left in contact with the oil or grease long, the rubber swells and becomes weak.

Rubber used in elastic fabrics, such as foundation garments, is more easily damaged by oil and grease than other kinds of rubber. If these garments are worn next to the skin, the body oils may cause them to weaken--unless the garments are washed frequently. Rubber in tires or in other articles that have to come in contact with grease and oil very often are specially treated to resist both.

Copper is another enemy of rubber. This won't give you much trouble if you remember not to wear rubber gloves when polishing brassware or copper kitchen ware--or when you use balls of brass threads to clean up sticky pots and pans. When rubber comes in contact with copper it gets sticky and soft, then hard and brittle.

Neither rubber nor rubberized cloth should ever be dry cleaned. Dry cleaning fluids may be used on rubber to remove grease or oil. But they must be used carefully, then allowed to evaporate thoroughly and quickly.

CLEANING RUBBER

You can keep most rubber goods clean with water or with warm water and soap. You can use soap of any kind on articles made solely of rubber. But if you are washing a garment that is part rubber, part fabric, use a mild soap for the fabric's sake.

Wash sheet rubber or rubber-coated cloth by spreading the sheet, or apron, or raincoat, or whatever article you want to clean on a table or bench. Scrub with a soft brush with mild soap and warm water. Dry with a cloth or hang to dry.

Be especially careful when you wash garments woven from rubber thread. Foundation garments, suspenders, plain elastic, rubber webbing around the waistline or cuffs of a sweater need to be treated gently when they are damp. Use mild soap and warm water. Rinse throughly. Hang to dry. A heavy girdle will dry more quickly if it is rolled up first in a piece of dry cloth. But remember to roll or

fold it lengthwise and not to let the metal supports cut the rubber.

Dry all rubber garments or rubber articles in a cool or only moderately warm place--never near a radiator, stove, or hot pipe. Do not expose to direct sunlight. And if you have to iron a garment with rubber in it,-press as lightly as possible.

HOW TO REMOVE GREASE, OIL, TAR FROM RUBBER

Remove any kind of grease, oil, or tar, immediately. If you do, you usually can get the rubber clean with warm water and soap. However, in stubborn cases, it is usually possible to remove any of these three with carbon tetrachloride or other dry cleaning fluids. Carbon tetrachloride is recommended because it is efficient and not inflammable. If you use any other dry cleaning fluid be sure it evaporates quickly and leaves no deposit as it evaporates. Never use gasoline motor fuel.

Sponge the grease, oil, or tar lightly with the fluid. If you have to soak to remove, never leave the rubber in the fluid more than 2 or 3 minutes. Be very careful of the rubber while it has the fluid on it, because it is weaker then and tears more easily.

It is a good idea always to wash the baby's rubber nipples as soon as he finishes with them. Butterfat in contact with the rubber is absorbed as any other grease--causes the nipple to swell, soften, and weaken.

HOW TO STORE RUBBER

Best place to store rubber is some place where it is cool and dark. The attic is usually the poorest spot--the basement the best. Other poor storage places for rubber are closets on a south wall--those near steam or hot water pipes--or those near hot air ducts.

Put rubber away clean and dry. If the spot in which you are storing the rubber is not dark, wrap the rubber in thick paper or put it in a covered box. Try

to store the article in as natural a position as possible. If you must fold or crease it--dust the surfaces that come in contact with each other with talcum powder or cornstarch. Hot water bottles may be put away in the boxes in which they came. Boots and galoshes may be stuffed loosely with paper.

REPAIRING RUBBER

Many rubber articles can be repaired. Do not try to do so, however, if the rubber is getting sticky, or hard and brittle. Naturally, there is also a limit to the size of a tear you can repair successfully.

Suitable rubber mending materials are rubber cements, plastic rubber compounds, and adhesive, electricians', and friction tapes. Rubber may be patched with self material or with inner tube patching.

To patch a hot water bottle or an ice pack, for instance, the following procedure is recommended.

Turn the bag inside out if it is the type that will turn inside out. If it is not, put the patch on the outside. Cut the piece of inner tube patching 1/2 inch larger all around than the spot you are mending. Take the Holland cloth off the inner tube patch; rough up the surface of the bag where you are mending it with sandpaper. Apply one coat of rubber cement to the patch--two coats to the rubber bag. Let each coat dry, then put the patch squarely on the spot to be mended and do not move it. Press it down firmly and leave it for a little time under a weight until the patch sets.

You can use the same sort of a patch on a raincoat or rubber sheeting. Or you can use self material for the repair. If you do use self material--use two coats of rubber cement on both the patch and the place you are patching. And if the material matches--put the raincoat patch on the outside to turn water better.

Rubber galoshes may be repaired on the soles with ready made stick-on soles that come complete with directions for applying. Boots that become snagged may sometimes be repaired by a handy man in a tire shop who has the equipment for putting on a "hot" or vulcanized patch.

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THE MARKET BASKET
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GET THE GOOD FROM VEGETABLES

Now that the tag end of winter is on us--it's a good time to check over the repertoire of current vegetable dishes.

Is your family getting the good--in food values and happy eating--from every vegetable you serve? Some of the following practical suggestions for getting the good from vegetables may help you check on your present care and preparation of vegetables. They are offered by the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

THE GOOD IN VEGETABLES

As a group, the vegetables are a valuable source of many of the vitamins and minerals we must have daily for good health. They also furnish other food values in varying amounts. But the vitamins and minerals are the values we can lose most easily by careless preparation.

Of these--vitamin C is the easiest to lose. Some of it may be destroyed by heat, some of it disolves in the cooking water, and soda increases its destruction. Vitamin B_1 is also lost in the same ways. Minerals are not destroyed by heat, but they do dissolve in cooking water, and you lose some of them if you throw away the pot liquor.

Among the nutritionally important foods are tomatoes, green-colored vegetables--especially the leafy green ones--, and yellow vegetables.

Tomatoes, like citrus fruit, are an excellent source of vitamin C--whether you serve them fresh or canned. That's the reason nutritionists recommend one serving daily of tomatoes or citrus fruit, or some other fruit or vegetable rich in vitamin C.

Both yellow and green-colored vegetables are rich sources of carotene, which the body can turn into vitamin A. Green vegetables also are good sources of iron, most of them are good sources of vitamin C, and some supply a goodly amount of calcium as well. The leafy greens rate even higher than other green vegetables for their content of carotene, iron, and vitamin C. For these reasons, nutritionists recommend one serving of either a yellow or a green vegetable every day.

Besides these two vegetable "musts," everyone in the family needs at least two or more servings of other vegetables or fruits. If you can have more, that's even better.

A RAW VEGETABLE EVERYDAY

At least one vegetable should be served raw everyday. For practically all vegetables have some vitamin C in them which may be lost in cooking. You need this extra supply of vitamin C to supplement the daily citrus fruit or tomatoes. The raw vegetable contains other vitamins and also lends crispness and variety to the diet.

When you serve vegetables raw--preserve their food value by using them as soon as possible after you buy them or bring them in from your garden. Keep them cool as possible while they are waiting. Wash them just before you use them and never let them soak in water. Prepare chopped vegetable salads just before you serve them. When you chop vegetables finely and then let them wait for some time before you eat them, you lose a lot of vitamin C.

WHEN YOU COOK VEGETABLES

The biggest share of the vegetables you serve will be cooked. So learn to cook so you'll lose as little food value as possible. Here are some of the important things to remember.

Leave vegetables in nature's covering as long as you can--even during cooking. If it isn't practical to cook the vegetable in its jacket, make peelings as thin as possible. Don't cook the vegetables any longer than you have to. For instance, don't stew vegetables when some other method is practical.

Have water boiling when you put vegetables in to cook, use as little water as possible, and cook rapidly. Use the cooking water served on the vegetable, or in soups, sauces, and gravies. When you pour out this pot liquor you are wasting the very food values for which you grew or bought the vegetables in the first place. Never use the vitamin B- or vitamin C destroyer soda when you cook any vegetables.

Try not to stir vegetables while they are cooking. Never put them through a sieve while they are still hot. Air hastens the destruction of some vitamins.

Canned vegetables should also be cooked quickly as possible. And use all the juice that comes with the canned vegetable. Like pot liquor, it is full of unseen food values.

Cook frozen vegetables in the smallest possible amount of boiling water. Never let them thaw before you drop them in the cooking water. You lose vitamins if you do.

Serve vegetables as quickly as possible once they are cooked.

All these rules are for getting the very most of the vitamins and minerals in vegetables. All in all, it's well to follow them closely. But don't be afraid to break a rule now and then if it makes for a better tasting dish. For if the family comes back for second helpings and thus gets extra food value--you're justified. Temper the rules with your own judgment and the tastes of your family.

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THE MARKET BASKET
by
Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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TAKE CARE OF YOUR REFRIGERATOR

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Now that the War Production Board has "frozen" production of family-sized mechanical refrigerators, every homemaker who owns one will want to take better care of hers than ever.

So believes Lenore Sater, chief of the household equipment division of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Home Economics.

"A homemaker who runs her refrigerator efficiently will be helping the war effort in more ways than one," points out Miss Sater. "For not only does she conserve valuable materials that make up her refrigerator, but the energy that it takes to run the refrigerator as well.

"In peace time, about 20 percent of the electricity used in homes goes to run electric refrigerators. Now that electrical energy has become a critical need of war production, it is absolutely necessary to use it as economically as possible!"

In the following paragraphs, Miss Sater lists some of the simple precautions homemakers can take to make their gas or electric refrigerators last longer, serve better, and conserve energy.

CHECK THE LOCATION

The amount of energy a refrigerator uses depends partly on the temperature of the air right around the cabinet. The warmer this air, the more energy it uses.

The refrigerator should be set out of the sun and not too close to the stove. There needs to be space enough for good cifculation of air at the back and top.

Allow at least 2 1/2 inches leeway at the back of an electric refrigerator and 6 inches, preferably 12, at the top. A gas refrigerator needs also 2 1/2 inches at the back and from 10 to 12 inches leeway at the top.

An electric refrigerator less than 5 years old rarely runs more than one-third the time at average room temperatures. If it runs more than this, find out why. Maybe you need a new gasket around the door. Or perhaps the hinges need tightening. You can check the tightness of the gasket by closing the refrigerator door on a new dollar bill. If the dollar pulls out easily with the door closed, you need a new gasket. If neither gasket nor hinges seem to be causing the trouble have a service man check the refrigerator.

WATCH THE TEMPERATURE

Keep the refrigerator cold--but not too cold. You're wasting energy if you keep the temperature in the cabinet below 40 degrees Fahrenheit even in the coldest spot. This coldest spot, reserved for milk and raw meat, needs to be between 40 and 45 degrees Fahrenheit at all times. You're not getting safe refrigeration if any part of the cabinet gets above 50 degrees.

If you think your refrigerator temperatures may be out of line, have them checked by the home service department of the company that furnishes you gas or electricity. Or get a reliable refrigerator thermometer and check for yourself. If you do not have the proper temperatures at the normal setting of the temperature control, call a service man.

Don't make the refrigerating mechanism work overtime by opening the door more often or for a longer time than necessary. When you turn the temperature -

control down for quick freezing, remember to turn it back again to normal setting as soon as the quick freezing is finished. To save on gas or electricity, it's a good idea not to do too much quick freezing.

STORE FOODS CAREFULLY

Bring all warm foods to room temperature before you put them in the refrigerator. Cover all foods except those that have thick skins. Moisture from foods left uncovered evaporates and collects on the freezing unit. That makes it necessary to defrost the refrigerator more often.

Storing foods without covers also lets the flavors escape into the circulating air. Then delicate foods, such as butter and custards, take on the flavor of other foods in the cabinet.

Remember that it takes energy to cool everything you put in the refrigerator. Never store foods that do not require refrigerator temperatures to keep them. Never put into the cabinet paper bags, pasteboard cartons, tops of hulls of vegetables you won't use, or containers larger than you need.

Don't overcrowd the refrigerator. There needs to be free circulation of air in the cabinet if the refrigerator is to work efficiently.

KEEP IT CLEAN

Be sure only clean food and clean containers go into the refrigerator. If food spills, wipe it up immediately. Some foods contain acid that may injure the glaze on the cabinet lining, make it harder to keep clean.

Now that there's a rubber shortage, be especially careful of the rubber gasket around the door. Wipe off any food or grease immediately and try not to grasp it with greasy hands. Grease is a natural enemy of rubber.

Defrost the refrigerator before the ice on the freezing unit gets 1/4 inch

thick. This is usually once a week--more often in summer or in humid climates.

Regular defrosting helps keep the right refrigerator temperatures. For ice around the freezing unit acts as a blanket, raises the temperature in the whole cabinet. To keep normal temperatures with this blanket, you need to lower the temperature control. That takes more energy.

Defrosting time is the best time to clean the refrigerator thoroughly. Take out all food, ice trays, and vegetables. Wash the inside of the cabinet and pans with a solution of about 1 tablespoon baking soda to 3 quarts warm water. Wipe with a cloth wrung from clear water, and dry. Be sure to wash the freezing unit inside and out. Evaporated odors from food have a tendency to cling to the surface of this even after ice melts.

Wash the outside of the cabinet with warm mild suds. Never use harsh scouring powders. Wipe with a cloth wrung from clear water, and dry. A good wax-base polish, put on every 2 or 3 months, will clean and help preserve lacquer or enamel finish.

If yours is an electric refrigerator, clean the grids or fins of the mechanism in the motor compartment two or three times a year. Use a brush or the suction hose of a vacuum cleaner. It is best to disconnect the refrigerator before you clean the grids.

If you have an open-type unit--oil it as often as the manufacturer's directions recommend. Use a light oil, such as automobile oil. Keep the motor belt free from dust and grease by wiping with a dry cloth. Motor belts stretch after long use and should be checked about every six months. You can tighten them yourself. But its best to have a service man show you how the first time.

VACATION CARE

If you go away for a few days, turn the temperature control down to the warmest position. That will be cool enough to keep the food if the door isn't opened while you are away. If you go on a long vacation--empty ice trays, defrost and clean the refrigerator thoroughly. Leave the door open. If yours is an electric refrigerator with an open type unit--have a service man shut off the valves. If it is a sealed type unit--simply disconnect the current. If it's a gas refrigerator, turn off the gas.

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by
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MARKET LISTS FOR
LOW-COST MEALS

"War job number 1 of every U.S. homemaker is to feed her family so as to keep them on their toes—not simply on their feet", says Dr. Hazel Stiebeling, Senior Food Economist of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Home Economics.

"Every family ill-fed is a form of subtle sabotage of our total war effort. An ill-fed person may be able to 'get by' in normal times. But he cannot be expected to stand the harder work—longer hours—and increased tension that civilians have to take when a Nation is at war."

How to get a good diet when food dollars are limited and food prices up is a problem that challenges many a U.S. homemaker today. To help her, the home economists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture have prepared three workable guides to low-cost meals.

These guides come in the form of market lists for a week. From these lists can be worked out menu plans for a week—meals that will give all the calories, protein, minerals, and vitamins needed for every member of the family.

Each list is set up so that by a little addition any homemaker with any number in her family can easily figure out her list accordingly. The three plans differ somewhat in the stress placed on various food groups in each.

Plan A, for instance, includes more potatoes and somewhat more dairy products and meat than the other two. Plan B puts more emphasis on grain products and leafy, green, and yellow vegetables. Plan C uses more dry beans, fat, and eggs.

Using the market lists, Doctor Stiebeling shows how a typical American family of four would fare by Plan A, B, and C. For purposes of figuring out the lists Doctor Stiebeling assumes that the father of this family is a very hard worker—in a defense factory or on a farm. The mother is moderately active with housework—light farm chores or extra Red Cross work if she lives in town. The children are a boy 14, and a girl 9. Here's how their week's groceries would add up.

KIND OF FOOD	PLAN A	PLAN B	PLAN C
Milk	21 qts.	19 qts.	17 qts.
Potatoes and sweet potatoes	20 pounds	10 pounds	6 pounds
Dry beans, peas, nuts	2 pounds	2 pounds	4 pounds
Tomatoes and citrus fruit	7 pounds	6 pounds	7 pounds
Leafy, green, or yellow vegetables	9 pounds	14 pounds	7 pounds
Other vegetables and fruits	8 pounds	11 pounds	14 pounds
Eggs	16 eggs	14 eggs	20 eggs
Meat, poultry, fish	7 pounds	6 pounds	6 pounds
Flour and cereals	19 pounds	21 pounds	19 pounds
Fats and oils	4 pounds	4 pounds	5 pounds
Sugars, sirups, preserves	*3 to 4 pounds	*3 to 4 pounds	*3 pounds

* Or as rationed

Which diet the family might want to choose from these three possibilities would depend on family tastes and on what is available at the stores in their locality at any particular season of the year. It might also depend upon how much homegrown food they could produce and what kind. A homemaker who buys all her food might like to use different plans from week to week for variety.

Naturally, every food bought will not be shared equally by all four members of the family. Children need more of the eggs and the milk than the grown-ups. The hard-working father and the growing and active boy need more of the energy-giving foods--potatoes, dry beans, cereals, etc. With few exceptions, however, the family appetite will pretty well distribute the food correctly if no one eats one type of food to the exclusion of others.

Some of the milk may be used in cooking and some of it may be in forms other than fresh fluid milk. Five ounces of American cheese--1 quart of skim milk plus 1 1/2 ounces of butter--3 1/2 ounces of dry skim milk plus 1 1/2 ounces of butter--17 ounces of evaporated milk--are all about equivalent to 1 quart of fluid whole milk.

For low-cost meals, it's best to eat most of the cereals in their most nutritious form--that is, as whole-grain products or as "enriched" white bread or white flour. And when you're adding up the flour and cereals you buy, count 1 1/2 pounds of bread as 1 pound of flour in the cereal column. As fats, count very fat foods such as bacon and salt pork.

Any homemaker will be able to buy the sweets suggested in these lists well within a 12-ounce-per-person-per-week ration. For normally, the family eats some of its sweets in the form of sirups and preserves. And a ration of 12 ounces per week would amount to 3 pounds of white granulated sugar for this family.

Should sugar supplies become such that the weekly sugar ration is much lower, the homemaker can adjust the plans. One thing she can do is to increase her purchases of some of the other energy-giving foods in the market lists. She might buy more potatoes, more dry beans or peas, more flour and cereals. Her family will be just as well nourished.

The three complete market lists to help you choose a low-cost diet for any size family is available from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C., for 5 cents a single copy. The title is "3 Market Lists for Low-Cost Meals."

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